



Lucidity



The Innovation Leadership Launchpad

By Lucy Gower

Introduction

Right now, the world feels uncertain and unpredictable. I've even stopped checking the news when I wake up because I'm anxious about what mayhem might have occurred while I was sleeping.

In addition to global mayhem, we each have our own day-to-day problems to deal with.

'Innovation' is often cited as the solution to everything. Like a tick box exercise innovation teams are put in place. Some organisations are able to find budgets for product development, staff training and incentives. However, societally, organisationally and as individuals I don't believe that we are achieving the pace or scale of change required to tackle our problems.

For the last 10 years I've been working with individuals, teams and organisations to help them to innovate; to shift mind-sets and approaches and make change happen.

Time and time again I've noticed the same blocks to leading innovation – and when I say leading I'm not talking about senior leadership job titles – I'm talking about the choice that every person makes to lead fresh thinking and make change happen in whatever context you operate in.

I wanted to delve a bit deeper. Through a survey and a series of interviews with people who are making change happen across a range of sectors, this report identifies key blockers to leading innovation and practical ways to overcome them, so that whatever type of innovation you are tasked with, as an individual or as an organisation, you are better equipped to make real and lasting change happen.

Let me know how you get on.



Lucy Gower
Founder and Director, Lucidity
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Summary

Innovation seems to mean something different depending on who you talk to. For clarity up front, this report refers to innovation in its broadest sense

“what you do differently to achieve your mission”.

This might be new product development, making incremental changes that can add up to make a big impact or radical innovation; changing the business model of how you or your whole sector currently works. Fundamentally, if you are trying to make any kind of change happen, as far as we are concerned it's innovation.

Over the years that we've worked with individuals, teams and organisations, all too often we find that

people get stuck. They might lack a process for innovation, the confidence to persevere when their idea gets met with negativity or even just coming up with good ideas that make life easier for their customers in the first place.

We've written this report to hone in on the biggest barriers to innovation and to give you practical tips and tools to help you increase your confidence and skills for creativity, leading innovation and achieving better results.



Methodology

We've interviewed 15 leaders in innovation from a range of sectors each with different experiences. We've combined those interviews with the results from a survey of over 300 people telling us their views on the barriers to, and the secrets of success when it comes to innovation. At the end of the report there are some practical tips and tools to help you improve your innovation skills and get better results relevant for all types of innovation.

FORCE

Innovation doesn't just happen. And there's no single right way because for every problem there are many solutions. We've observed that people who are good at innovation develop habits and ways of working. They are a force to be reckoned with. From our interviews, survey results and experience of working with organisations for the last 10 years, five interconnected themes stand out. If you don't have them, are blockers to innovation but with them in place are innovation enablers.

To make it easy to remember we summarised the five key themes into an acronym FORCE.

Focus

It's simply not possible to innovate about everything. Innovation leaders all have a strategy for innovation. Focusing on the problem that you are solving, and framing it in a way that others will understand is the starting point for innovation whether that is for you, internal teams or your customers.

Optimise your time

The only constant is time. We all have the same number of hours in the day, and every successful innovator told us of the critical importance of making time and space for creative thinking and innovation. That might be prioritising thinking time away from your desk or office, turning off interruptions or

having a strict meeting etiquette to reduce meeting length and frequency to increase time available to focus on longer term strategies.

Resilience

This is the ability to take a rejection or a knock back, learn from it and get back up again. And again. And again. All the innovation leaders told us that the first idea won't be the best and had an attitude of learning by doing and then improving. The act of doing is critical for learning and better innovation.

Connect

This is about other people. All our innovators had strong and established networks. They either worked in collaboration, or sought help and support from networks of friends, colleagues, customers, mentors and coaches. It blows the myth out of the water of the lone genius having a 'lightbulb moment'. Our innovators asked for help from anywhere they could get it!

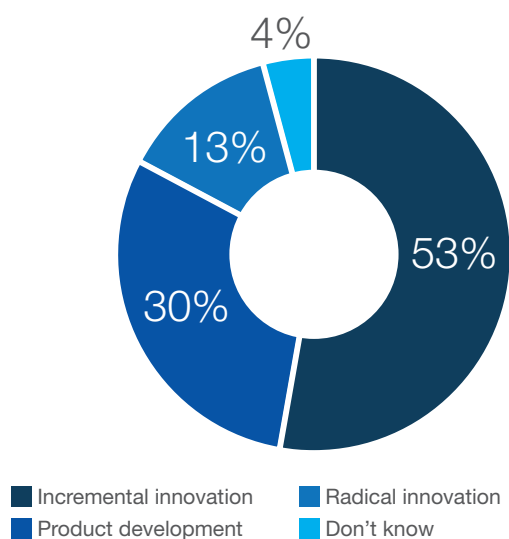
Engage – with audiences

Every innovation leader talked about engaging with the audience they were innovating for in order to better understand their needs. They saw engagement as critical in understanding how to develop products, services and messaging. They also talked about engaging with influencers, for example internal teams and senior managers as well as helping customers understand the benefits of new and unknown products or services.



What our survey told us

We wanted to find out more about attitudes, approaches, blocks and enablers to innovation. Over 300 people shared their personal and organisational approach to innovation with us in a survey. Participants came from a range of sectors, and included one-person bands to multi-million pound companies. The key findings are highlighted below.



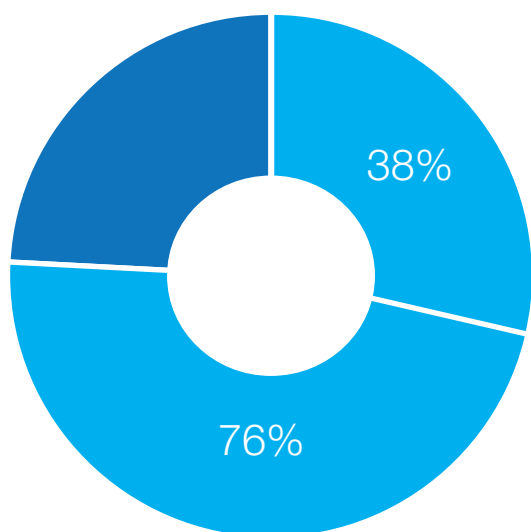
What is innovation?

As outlined in the summary, innovation can mean something different depending on where you work, what you are working on and who you ask.

Just over half of our respondents are focusing on incremental innovation (53%), the small changes to products, services and ways of working that can add up to make a big impact.

A third of responders are focusing their innovation efforts on new product development (30%), either developing brand new, or modifying existing products for current customers or new markets. 13% are taking a radical approach to innovation and working out how to change their business model entirely. And 4% of people just don't know.

Almost a quarter of respondents (22%) had no approach or strategy for innovation at all. On delving a bit deeper the majority of these felt that either *'it was too daunting to start'* or their tried and tested ways were working and *'if it's not broken don't try and fix it'* or they were simply working to get *'the basics'* right so *'not ready to innovate.'*

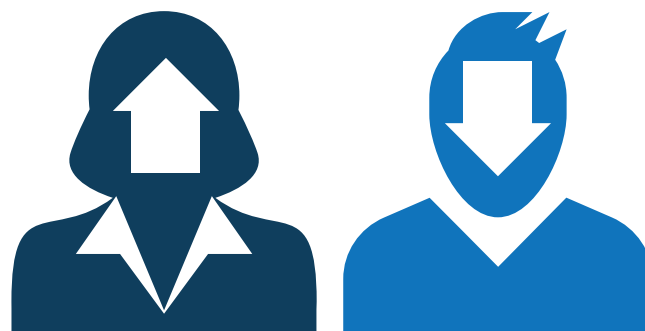


76% The percentage of people who think innovation is important
38% The percentage of this group, who are doing it well

How important is innovation?

Just over three quarters of people told us that innovation was important to their organisational strategy (76%). However, slightly less than half of these who say it is strategically important felt their organisation is doing it well. Only 38% felt that their organisation was *really* taking innovation seriously *and* doing it well. The rest were frustrated that innovation was discussed as being important yet no real steps were being taken to drive it.

Of the organisations that told us they were taking innovation seriously, a quarter had a strategy for radical innovation. Of these the majority had a dedicated approach. A small number (8%) told us they had no formal approach. It's hard to assess whether radical innovation is 'working' until the breakthrough comes but perhaps those without an approach already have an organisational DNA for this type of innovation, and *'it's just how we do things round here'*?

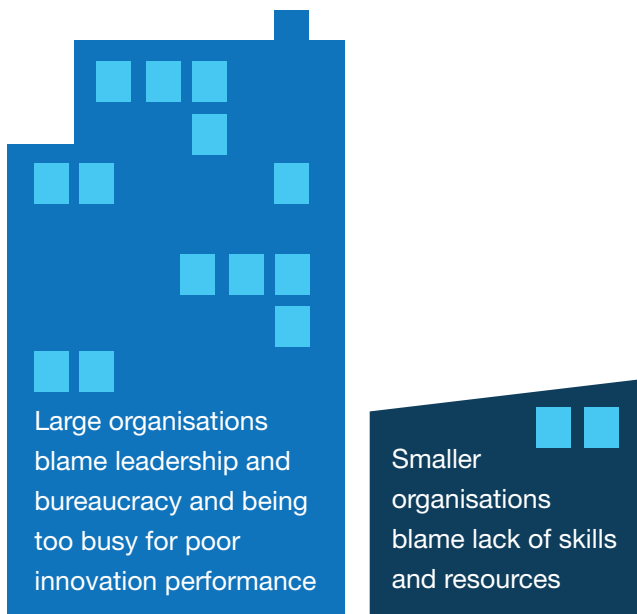


The more senior the more important innovation becomes and more likely they are to feel good about it. Mid level managers see it as lowest importance and had lowest performance

What about seniority?

It would appear from our results that that the more senior you are in an organisation the more important innovation becomes, (and also, the more likely you are to feel that you are good at it!). This may link to the old adage *'what gets measured gets done'* as senior managers were more likely to have specific objectives around innovation.

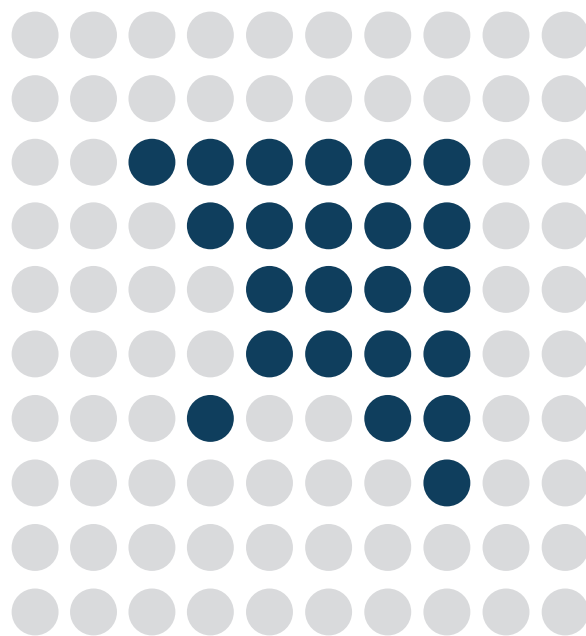
Mid-level managers saw the importance of and their performance in innovation as lowest. When we looked a little deeper and cross-referenced with our interviews from large organisations (see pages 14 and 18) this is no surprise as the grind of fire-fighting everyday tasks and managing up, down and across takes away priority from innovation. We asked respondents what their most pressing tasks were and we had close to 1,500 open ended answers. We had a huge number of responses relating to internal processes, management of workload, and very specific and immediate tactical tasks. Only 8% of what is most pressing to our participants could be described as innovation, or the need to innovate.



Does size matter?

According to our respondents the perceived importance and quality of innovation reduces as organisations get larger, despite larger organisations setting employees more personal objectives around innovation. These larger organisations (defined as £1million+ turnover or >500 employees) are also more likely to blame lack of leadership, bureaucracy or simply being too busy as the reasons for a lack of innovation. Smaller companies (with less than £500,000) are more likely to blame lack of skills and resources.

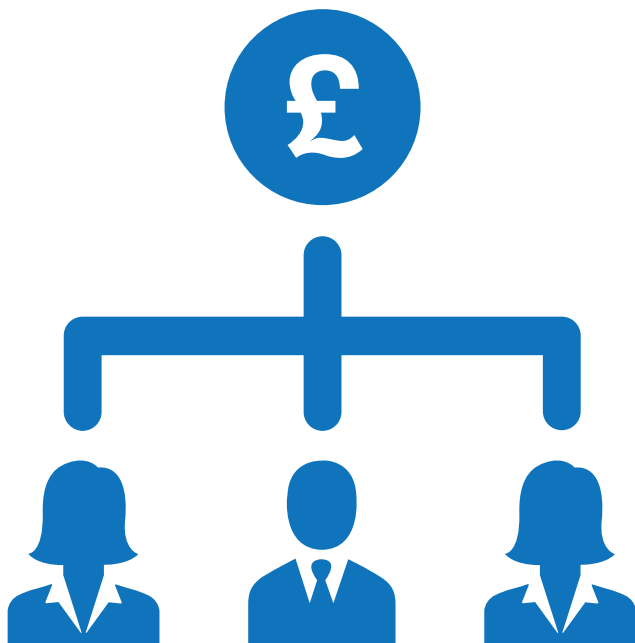
As companies get bigger they are likely to shift to incremental innovation (small changes that can add up to make a big impact) as their primary innovation strategy.



Having a dedicated innovation team is helpful

23% of the organisations represented in the survey have a dedicated innovation team whose job it is to 'innovate'. This, as you may expect appears to drive up the perception and belief in innovation effectiveness.

Just over half (51%) of those with innovation teams believe their organisation innovates well, compared to just 34% of those without innovation teams.



In prioritising spend for innovation, invest in people before an innovation budget

Having an innovation budget also helps, but less than having a team

Only a quarter of respondents (25%) have a dedicated innovation budget. However, the perceived effectiveness from an innovation budget is less than for a team. Those that have a team *and* a budget show innovation quality as the same as just having a team. So, if you have to choose between a team and a pot of money – invest in people.



■ People who say day to day firefighting stops them innovating

The biggest barrier

The single biggest barrier to innovation was lack of time, a universal challenge.

Across all sizes of organisations, only 18% think lack of innovation is cultural, 82% felt the primary reason why their organisation does not innovate is because people are too busy reacting to day-to-day challenges to seriously consider innovation which is seen as a longer-term strategy. 17% feel lack of innovation is down to leadership, (although you could argue that organisational ‘busyness’ and lack of leadership *are* cultural).

Only 14% believe that lack of skill is a barrier for innovation.

In summary

Of the people we surveyed three quarters are trying to innovate. Our findings suggest that broadly the will to innovate is there, but it gets lost in the day-to-day requirements. When asked for their requirements to allow innovation to flourish, no one said a time machine or ways to allocate more time or systems and processes for innovation. The focus was much more on making a cultural change a core part of which is being allowed time to think, finding courage, and in particular courage to fail, as well as becoming more inclusive and connected as an organisation, both internally and externally.



What our interviews told us

We handpicked an eclectic mix of individuals each with a story and significant learning to share from their experience of leading innovation. From one person start-ups to multi million global companies, Paralympic gold medallists, solo world travellers and mental health nurses who candidly share their experiences to inspire and give practical tips that you can apply to your work. What we've learned is that there is no single right way to innovate but there are commonalities in attitude and approach that we can all learn from and apply to whatever sector or role we work in. We've divided our report into five interconnecting themes that were a FORCE that ran through every single interview.

You can read the full length interviews at www.lucidity.org.uk/blog

Focus

A misconception that crops up time and time again is that innovation is about ideas and brainstorming. These things are an element of innovation but by far the most critical part is where you focus your innovation in the first place. Choosing where to spend your energy to make the most impact starts with the problem you are trying to solve for your customer. Changing anything is difficult so you have to be absolutely focused on why the innovation you are working on is important to you as well as the difference it will make to your customer. In this section get advice from Luke Southern, Managing Director at Drum, Nimisha Raja Founder at Nim's Crisps and Han Gerrits, a specialist innovation consultant.



Just because you can, it doesn't mean you should

Luke Southern is Managing Director at Drum the creative arm of Omnicom Media Group. Drum are a content and creative business that helps ambitious brands, including McDonald's, Virgin Media, Warner Brothers and Hasbro to create and influence popular culture.

Innovation is vital for Drum.

“Because the world is moving so quickly success for our clients is dependent on doing things differently, and creatively - and being up against it drives innovation.”

However, just because you can, it doesn't mean you should. Companies create clever widgets and gadgets that people just aren't ready for or don't need. There is a balance. Innovation needs to be something that people want. It needs to benefit people's lives or to solve a problem. Just because it's new doesn't mean that it's automatically something that people are excited about.

Drum's starting point for innovation is an unmet need or a problem. Recent research has shown that 18-24 year olds (a core audience for the brands that Drum works with) have an eight second attention span. This means that companies have a tiny amount of time to make sure what they are saying is relevant.

One of the ways that Drum seeks to make their innovation successful is to place brands within the existing pop culture. Drum refers to this as creating “cultural signals” for brands.

For example, a couple of years ago Drum made the Lego ad break. They reconstructed an entire ad break out of Lego, remade popular ads of the time piece by piece. It drove opening weekend box office takings beyond expectations and it was a great piece of entertainment in its own right that has been watched millions of times.

Drum reused this approach to promote the Lego Batman movie. Lego Batman took over the continuity announcements on Channel 4. This meant that their target audience heard about the campaign from the media that they usually consume making Batman as relevant to film lovers in their 30s and 40s as it is to kids. 40% of the population saw Batman continuity announcements in just 4 days and 1 in 6 booked to see the movie as a result.



Luke Southern, Drum

“Innovation is bloody hard - people are addicted to certainty but certainty kills creativity.”

For Luke and his colleagues, the biggest barrier to making innovation happen is budget restraints versus creative ideas that you can't prove are going to work. Certainty kills creativity because you can never guarantee that something new is going to work.

Luke's 7 innovation tips

1. Focus on what your audience need.
2. Avoid using the “I'm the Boss and we're doing it my way” card.
3. Acknowledge problems because pretending they aren't there creates an atmosphere where people feel they can't talk about difficulties.
4. Encourage people to solve their own problems.
5. Listen and focus on saying less yet knowing where to intervene.
6. Be humble and don't be afraid of saying when you have made a mistake.
7. Being up against it helps you focus and it drives innovation.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Drum go to www.drum.co.uk

100% commitment to 100% natural

Nimisha Raja is founder of Nim's Fruit & Veg Crisps. When Nimisha owned a coffee shop she'd often observe the battle that raged between children wanting crisps and their parents wanting their children to eat something healthy.

One day she came across freeze dried apple pieces and the idea for fruit & veg crisps; a healthy snack that children wanted to eat and parents wanted to buy was born. She bought some equipment, made a make-shift kitchen in her garage and got to work. She worked evenings and weekends developing a healthy product, that tasted good, only used natural ingredients and was nutritious.

“Thankfully I was completely ignorant about what I was letting myself in for.”

Nimisha experimented for nine months with painstaking attention to detail to get the product and the branding right.

“I wanted people to see Nim's on the front of a pack and not have to look at the back for the list of ingredients - they would know it would be 100% natural.”

Finally, after endless sleepless nights Nimisha was happy. She tested the product in her own coffee shop. Then she tested selling her crisps at a stall at a local summer fair. She got good feedback. She then took Nim's crisps to the local delis and independent shops and offered them on a sale or return basis. 16 out of 20 shops she approached said 'yes'. She also wanted to test for repeat business potential.

“People might try a one off as a novelty, so if the shop could refill their tray three times then that's repeat business and then I knew the product had potential.”

12 of the 16 shops sold more than three trays.

Nimisha knew that being a niche supplier to small independent shops was not going to move her business forward. For her business to work it had to be at volume. But it's hard to make the shift when customers like your products. It took a friend to point out to Nimisha that selling a few hundred bags here and there wasn't sustainable.

Nimisha looked for factories that already dried fruit that had equipment that could be adapted to scale the fruit crisps business. She decided to test the approach with a factory in Hungary whose owner loved the product. He didn't speak a word of English though so his daughter drove for half a day for the meeting to translate for him!



Nimisha spent a lot of time showing the factory how to make the crisps. The logistics of getting the product from Hungary to the UK were also far more complex and expensive than she'd imagined.

By this time Nim's crisps were in Harrods, Selfridges, Planet Organic and three national distributors, which might sound big but it was not the volume needed to make adequate margins. In addition, there were problems with the quality. Scaling when manufacture wasn't right was a recipe for disaster so Nimisha decided to open her own factory.

Nimisha sold her house and her coffee shop, secured an investor and set up a factory from scratch. Her investor said, *"I'm investing in you - I don't know anything about the product but if anyone can make it work you can"*

With a 10,000-square foot factory in Kent, Nimisha spent six months making products and learning to use the machines. In this time, not a single fruit crisp was sold. They couldn't sell to supermarkets until they got the product right.

Nim's crisps stopped trading for a total of 18 months. When they reopened their biggest challenge was that people simply didn't understand the concept of a fruit crisp. They thought they were some sort of fruity flavoured snack.

"It takes a long time for people to understand something new."

In June 2016 Nim's joined 'Produced in Kent' – a trade organisation supporting food businesses in Kent. Just three months after opening the factory they hosted a stand at a food trade show in Belgium. The response was tremendous. They are now selling to overseas markets as well as starting to gain traction with big UK supermarkets including Co-op and Ocado. Their next challenge is maintaining a high-quality product while managing the increased demand.



Nimisha Raja, Nim's Fruit & Veg crisps

"I want my crisps to be an everyday product. 1 of our 5 a day. The cost has to be comparable to a packet of crisps – health shouldn't be expensive and I can only achieve that price point with scale."

Nimisha's 7 innovation tips

1. Focus on what you set out to achieve. Follow your instinct and have belief. I wouldn't have started if I didn't think it had potential.
2. Just because you can't do it now doesn't mean that you can't learn. You know more than you think you know.
3. Make sure there is a market for your product. Don't make something so innovative that it's too hard for someone to understand.
4. Understand that it will take time and money to develop your idea and then more to make it commercial.
5. Anyone can copy you. Be prepared for this and protect yourself where possible.
6. Don't dawdle and waste time - just get on with it.
7. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Nim's go to www.nimsfruitcrisps.com

Companies that are good at innovation have a strategic focus

Han Gerrits has 15 years of experience working with large multi-million pound organisations to help them build their capabilities, departments and systems for successful innovation.

Time and time again Han has seen the same problems stopping successful innovation in large organisations. He shared, in his experience the biggest barriers to innovation.

“Rules and regulations that don’t allow for experimentation”



Han Gerrits

Han is currently a partner at an international audit firm. Audit, in particular, is heavily regulated and has a strict set of operating rules making it hard to innovate. Han believes that in a big organisation, successful innovation requires a different set of rules from business as usual.

For example, in the context of innovation, failure is a positive learning experience. There’s an understanding and an acceptance that success is

not guaranteed. A new innovation needs time for experimentation and learning.

Thomas Edison failed over 9,000 times before he made the light bulb that worked. This ‘experiment and learn’ approach, critical for innovation, is not part of the rules and is not tolerated in normal business operations.

The next common stumbling block for innovation in large organisations is a cycle of investing budget for a new idea or innovation programme.

This test and learn approach isn’t given enough time to succeed and the project or programme is stopped because it ‘didn’t work’. Then months later the innovation programme is revisited and the start-stop cycle repeats itself, never given long enough to learn.

According to Han, it’s not just the timescale that lets the innovation down, it’s lack of focus. Companies that are good at innovation have a strategic focus in a limited amount of areas. This means that every failed experiment has valuable and highly relevant learning which leads onto the next experiment and ultimately innovation success.

Google says, “*chaos is good*” and that “*freedom from constraints delivers new ideas*”. But even that only applies in certain parts of Google’s business. Their data centres don’t allow any chaos or experimentation, because their business relies on their servers being 100% reliable 100% of the time.

So, whilst Han hears organisations talking about innovation and disruption, when it comes to the potential disruption of core business systems, large organisations are rarely keen to support innovation.



“Most big organisations are risk adverse. They are anxious about doing anything that might disturb their core business that brings in the money.”

For example, Han shared an experience with a checklist for new ideas. There were two fundamental questions to decide if an idea was worth pursuing. “Have we done this before?” and “Do we know this client?” If the answer to either question was ‘no’ then the idea gets turned down straight away. This meant that the focus was only ever on existing products to existing clients. As soon as something didn’t follow those rules it was stopped, making the opportunity to try something genuinely new non-existent in practice.

Is innovation a good career move?

Often in large organisations people are consciously navigating a career path. They are looking for their next job within the company. If as an individual, you fear that a ‘failed’ project could signal the end of a career you’ll never be able to innovate and the innovation department isn’t an attractive career move. Han suggests that this is compounded by newly appointed innovation managers often over promising

results with inadequate resource. There’s a high churn rate, a lot of innovation managers leave within three years then move on to a new innovation role and start again which has an impact on organisational innovation and learning.

Han’s 7 innovation tips

1. Focus innovation around the strategic plans of the business.
2. Consider how external forces will have an impact on your core business and therefore drive innovation e.g. how might 3D printing impact the business you are in?
3. If the top management doesn’t want to do innovation then don’t do it – it’s a waste of energy.
4. Engage with all employees to make improvements in current practice – this creates a culture where everyone is an innovator.
5. You need bravery and energy – innovation is about doing not thinking.
6. Get some success fast.
7. Communication is very important - you have to tell people many times before they come on board.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog

Regardless of the size of organisation or project, your focus for innovation is important. What is the problem that your innovation is trying to solve? How do you frame it in a way that inspires others? Consider why is it important – to you, to your organisation and to your customer. If you need some help to focus see the practical tips on pages 40-42.



Optimise your time

We all have the same amount of time in our day, yet some people seem to achieve more. In larger organisations, ‘too busy and too much firefighting’ are the key reasons people feel their innovation efforts are hampered. In this section hear from Adrian Heesom at Hive, Roger Shadbolt in food development and Simon Penny, Michelle Butler and Paul Taylor at Bromford Lab with their guest article.

The deviant croissant that broke the rules

For the last five years Roger Shadbolt has been food product development manager for a food company that supplies to major UK retailers.

The food sector requires constant innovation, it's fast moving and demanding; yet despite this, innovation can sometimes be too formulaic.

The ‘normal’ process is that the retailer provides a brief based on food trends, customer insight and some indication on what they expect on their shelves. The supplier responds to the brief with a number of written ideas on which they receive feedback. Based on feedback the supplier provides three or four concepts in the next round complete with a full factory costing, and from that final products are chosen and put into production. The process of brief to shelf can take anything from six months to a year.

When it comes to innovation, Roger was telling me how he was lucky because *“I essentially had a great boss that gave me time and space to create”*

“I was given time, a clear desk and clear headspace and I was allowed time just for me. I put Radio 6 music on and started to create.”

As Roger was creating that morning he pondered over his own breakfast needs.



Roger Shadbolt

“I love croissants but I don’t have time on a work day to wait 15 minutes for the oven to heat up before I can reheat a store bought product to eat for breakfast.”

“I made a whole load of interesting shaped products in various loaf tins that would suit slicing for quick heating in the toaster like you would a slice of toast”

Roger gave his boss – Dan a toasted piece of the sliced croissant loaf. He was thrilled. Roger shared his insights about wanting croissants for breakfast but not having time on a week day to heat them up

in the oven. He asked the question; *“If this is the case for me, perhaps it’s also true for other people - for other customers?”*

Roger and Dan wondered if their clients would be as thrilled as they were with the insight and the idea, so they bypassed the normal processes and took their croissant loaf concept straight to their UK food retailer clients. They explained how a toasted croissant could be enjoyed mid week before work without use of an oven. Their clients loved it and wanted to know when they could launch it!

Within weeks the croissant loaf was flying off the shelves. People loved it.

Croissant loaf rode on a food trend at the time of hybrid products inspired by Dominique Ansel’s invention of the cronut (croissant/donut) followed by townies (tarts/brownies) and duffins (donut/muffins). Croissant loaf went on to win the Quality Food awards in the bakery morning goods category 2016. And all from Roger having the time and space to create.

“Innovation breeds innovation”

The good sales figures encouraged Roger and his team to innovate more. There was real excitement, which drove aspiration and momentum for innovation. People were more open to thinking differently, deviating from the norm and bending the rules.



©pexels.com

However, the development of the croissant loaf was not all plain sailing. The team at the factory that had made traditional croissants for 20 years weren’t keen at first. They didn’t want to use the machinery differently. Roger had to get the factory managers and their teams to buy into the idea.

He had to put his own excitement about his idea to one side. He let them work out how to best produce croissant loaf and he gave them ownership of developing the packaging. He was careful not to micromanage or be too prescriptive. He let them develop the best solution. Eventually the whole site was on his side working to get croissant loaves on the shelves.

Roger’s 7 innovation tips

1. Deliberately factor in time for them with nothing to do. Book ‘off timetable’ space.
2. Take the pressure off and play - if Roger’s first iteration of croissant loaf had needed to be customer ready it would have looked different and probably wouldn’t have happened.
3. Work on what interests you and make that happen. It’s really important to do something that interests you.
4. Don’t think too much. Don’t wait to start. Start right away.
5. Don’t get muddled in number crunching – get the first version down. Version one is never the final version.
6. There are many barriers and there is never a right time.
7. When people experience an idea they ‘get it’ much easier than a boring process and paper drawings – do what you can to bring your idea to life.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more about Roger Shadbolt go to www.rogershadbolt.co.uk

How to defeat corporate antibody syndrome

Launched in 2013 Hive enables you to control your heating and other useful devices from your phone. However, the UK's most popular smart thermostat isn't an innovation from a new tech start-up, it was developed from within British Gas.

Adrian Heesom was involved from the beginning of Hive. He shared some of his learning about innovating from within a big corporation.

“My experience is that most corporates have lots of ideas but executing them is the problem.”

British Gas had two failed attempts before Hive evolved to be the success it is today. Hive started out based within the main IT team. Whilst it stood alone as a separate project team, its proximity to the ‘mothership’ (as Adrian calls it) meant that it fell victim to what he calls, “Corporate Antibody Syndrome”. Managers from all over the organisation wanted to get involved, have their say and sign off on things. The innovation became stifled and the predecessor to Hive ground to a halt.

Adrian got involved in Hive because he ran the post investment review about why it failed. And when the second attempt failed after Corporate Antibodies infected the enthusiasm and stole time once more it became a catalyst to testing a different approach. British Gas sought external advice, which was to separate Hive innovation from the mothership, in terms of location, governance and people, giving time and space to focus on innovation with no interruptions.

Kassir Hussain, a project manager with a background in telecoms and innovation was brought in to lead the development of the third Hive attempt. He created an incubator and asked for some conditions.



Adrian Heesom, Hive

- ◆ Hive to be set up in central London, with access to the best developers, project managers and data scientists.
- ◆ Two years of investment with no ties.
- ◆ To own the HR process and have authority on who was hired and fired.
- ◆ Hives' own brand; Kassir knew that it was unlikely that anyone was going to buy a piece of the latest tech from the, albeit trusted, but traditional British Gas brand.
- ◆ Two team members from the existing British Gas core team; a finance director, and a change manager were appointed to ‘fend off the wolves.’

The Hive team structure emulated a start-up – the core team were entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial spirit permeated through the rest of the team. They failed fast and learned. They focused on the unique customer insight that led to the initial Hive concept as well as the changing needs of their customer. They concentrated on the customer before the technology.

“Making the initial idea happen is really hard, but holding onto the idea and evolving it as customers’ need it to evolve is even harder.”

Leadership is clearing the stage so the team can perform

The leadership and culture at Hive was a big departure from the structure of the mothership. At Hive leadership was no longer top-down and about telling people what to do, but to clear the path and let the experts do their job. It was also about keeping people aligned and focused on the core purpose. There was a shift from following a corporate five-year plan to focusing on a five-year vision and delivering a three-month plan that adapted to the changing customer needs and the learning along the way.

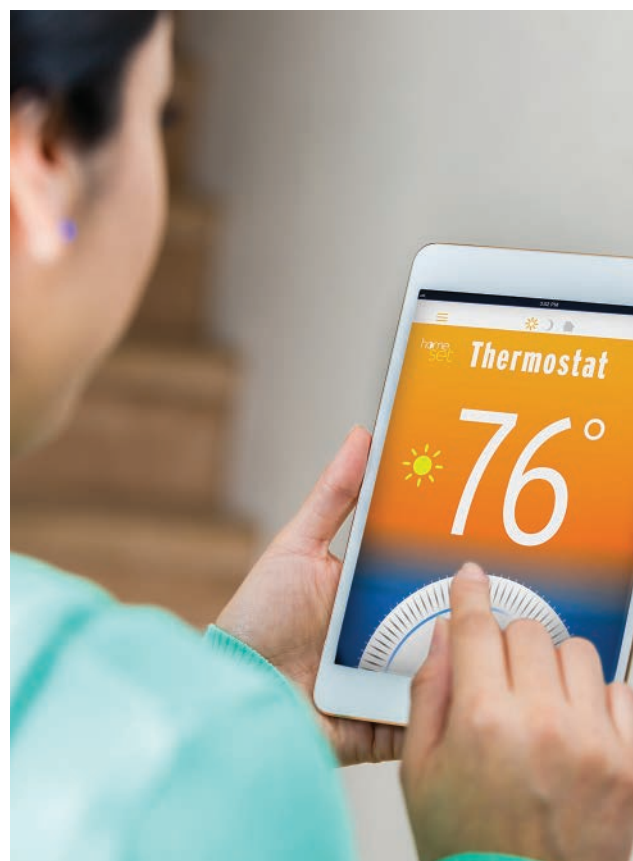
The benefit of the mothership was a ready-made route to market and in the case of Hive this was 10,000 trusted engineers who were good at fitting thermostats. Every engineer was given a Hive thermostat of their own to play with and try for themselves in their own homes. They were also involved in the design process. Because they liked the product and felt a sense of ownership they became an army of advocates and the best sales people Hive could have asked for.

Adrian has recently moved on from Hive to another corporate grown start-up – Now TV at Sky. For Hive to continue to succeed and grow he suggests it must stick to the three principles that made it successful in the first place: frictionless user experience, beautiful industrial design and constant customer feedback.

Adrian’s 7 innovation tips

1. Beware of Corporate Antibody Syndrome – make time and space.
2. Listen to your consumers and test and learn as fast as you can afford.
3. Any innovation starts with failure - embrace failure.
4. Fail quickly, learn and crack on - the people who are good fail fastest.
5. Create an incubator - don’t establish something that is governed in the same way as the mothership.
6. Don’t forget your corporate strengths – for Hive it was the British Gas engineers on the ground.
7. As the business grows don’t lose sight of the entrepreneurial spirit that made it successful in the first place.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Hive go to www.britishgas.co.uk/smart-home/hive.html



Doing things differently at Bromford Lab *Because saying you're different isn't enough* - a guest article first hand from the excellent team at Bromford

Bromford Lab works across Bromford, a Housing Association of 30,000 homes, to reimagine services, inspire new thinking and design new ways of working.

It seems that all organisations these days are talking about innovation. It's true of all sectors, but perhaps one of the fastest growing in it's thirst for innovation is the public and social facing sector, which is seeing a huge rise in the number of teams being setup to 'drive change' and 'promote new working cultures'. But, often the same organisations who are calling for such teams, are at the same time internally confused about why or how they will work; often overlooking the fact that meaningful innovation is disruptive by its nature and the impact that disruption will likely make on the fabric of the organisation.

We wanted to make sure that when we started upon our own journey of innovation we understood this impact, so we spent around a year scoping out what an Innovation Lab at Bromford might look like. We could see that there was a need to create a space for other colleagues to think differently about the problems they faced and come up with new types of solutions which could help drive the business forward, but the form that this took was set to evolve over time. Often, colleagues were having ideas, but increasingly found that they had no way of taking them forward, or even worse, took them forward without understanding how they fitted with the rest of organisational strategy.

"It's fair to say that [as an organisation] our focus on doing the right things for our customers has sometimes meant we followed our hearts rather than our heads – designing services around gut feelings, instincts and myths, rather than data, analytics and research." Philippa Jones, Chief Executive, Bromford



Simon Penny and Michelle Butler, Bromford Lab

The problem the Lab was set up to fix was that innovation was random and unfocused at Bromford. It happened at will, and there wasn't a resource to nurture and protect new ideas from colleagues. We describe it as 'initiative-itis' - there was an initiative for lots of things - but they didn't always solve the right problem and weren't always effective. Bromford Lab was launched back in 2014 as a place to nurture innovation. The Lab was founded using Jeff Bezos' principle of being a Two Pizza Team, that teams shouldn't be larger than two pizzas can feed. Small teams make it easier to communicate more effectively and encourage high autonomy and innovation. Since then we have been working across the business to help colleagues capture, frame and realise their ideas, with no pressure to force bad ideas to work. In fact, failing and failing fast was one of our founding principles. Over the past few years the lab approach has evolved. These days our Insight team (data analysis and research) and Innovation work closely together, and that has been important learning for us. Working off instincts is an important part of the design process, they can often give us a position to start from, but when we make judgments based on instincts alone, without the evidence to back them up, all we are really doing is making judgments based on what we think we know.

Back in the early days we tried a lot of things that we would never have been able to do before we set up the lab. From **Google Glass** to **Drones** and **Smart Homes** to **Loneliness**, the spirit of the lab was to get on and try things out. These speculative tests provided a lot of learning about the future of our business and the future direction of work, and we were able to use that learning to help colleagues start to design better, more informed services. But a side effect of our different way of working was becoming known as the team who have the 'wacky ideas'. This is both a blessing and a curse, because as anyone working in a social facing creative role knows, the lab is about more than 'wacky ideas', it's about social impact. In early 2017, Bromford were about to embark on one of their biggest challenges to date, an organisation wide transformation programme called 'Bromford 2point0'. The big question we were asking ourselves was how we could use this opportunity to embed the lab approach to innovation into the DNA of Bromford, whilst at the same time keeping true to the independent intent of the Lab?

Innovation & Organisational Change

The Lab has been asked to play a key role in Bromford 2point0, which is great because one of the things we have learned is that innovation cannot scale if it doesn't have a place within organisational strategy. Alongside the organisational transformation programme, Bromford are also in the process of moving to a localities based approach to working. Our Housing Managers are taking on new roles as Neighbourhood Coaches - a £3.5 million approach developed in the Lab - and we're reducing the size

of their patches from around 500-750 homes to around 175 homes. We recognise the benefits that getting to know our customers better can bring. We also know that we can't design services that our customers both need and will engage with, without understanding more about their lives and without involving them in the design process. Making decisions based on what we think we know can be dangerous and costly. If we understand people's needs and wants we can make decisions based on insight, both quantitative and qualitative. That's important because if we just think we know, all we are doing is making stuff up. The Lab is actually, therefore, the antithesis of an ivory tower; what we are doing is moving Bromford to a position where everything we do is based on some form of evidence and customer insight. We have a great opportunity to pick up weak signals from our communities and act upon them in a way that will help us provide services which meet the needs of our communities.

Bromford Lab's 7 innovation tips

1. Start with problems not solutions.
2. Autonomy over projects.
3. Link with policy.
4. Measure and communicate success.
5. Fast failure is good risk management - don't keep talking about it - try it.
6. Be ruthless pulling the plug.
7. You can't save the world on your own.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Bromford Lab go to www.bromfordlab.com

Both British Gas and Bromfield made time for innovation by separating it from the 'mothership', albeit it in a slightly different way. Roger just had a boss that gave him permission and space to create. There is no single right approach to making time for innovation, it's finding the approach that fits with the culture and environment you are working in. However, one thing is certain, to innovate effectively you must earmark time for you and your team to focus on innovation. If finding time is a challenge you might find the tips on pages 43 and 44 helpful.



Resilience

Everyone we interviewed talked about the importance of testing and learning from failure and keeping going. In our work, we've learned that the principle of learning from failure is understood, however the gap between principle and practice is huge. We think this is because failure is highly emotional and when we are emotional, our rational brain that knows that 'it is good to learn from failure' gets over-ridden by feelings of shame, guilt and fear which stops us from talking about failure. In this section learn from Neil Cloughley founder at Faradair, Giles Long inventor of LEXI and Emily Hatherday CEO of Schoolzine.

Did you fly into work today?

Neil Cloughley is Managing Director and Founder of Faradair® an aviation start up. Neil describes innovation as *"finding problems and creating solutions for those problems."*

When Neil was a teenager his dad, Trevor Cloughley built an unmanned air vehicle (UAV) company. This idea was before its time and needed UK Government interest to survive. Sadly, the assets of the business were sold to a group in the USA who were then awarded a contract by the US Government worth \$80m. Neil aged 16 promised his dad that he would *"finish the work his dad had started."*

Neil built his first career in IT. Back in the late 90's he had an idea for a tablet computer. He partnered with Siemens, SUN Microsystems and others in 2001 to develop one of the world's first tablet computers. It would have enabled people to send and receive email on the move from a device smaller than a laptop. Despite being painfully obvious now, 15 years or more ago it failed to gain traction, again another product before its time. One Venture Capitalist suggested the tablet, which although was *"a nice idea, would never take off because people had laptops"*. In 2004 Apple 'invented' the iPad and over 280 million tablets have been sold since.

When the IT market crashed in 2002 Neil started his second career selling commercial aircraft. It reignited his passion for aviation that he had as a child.

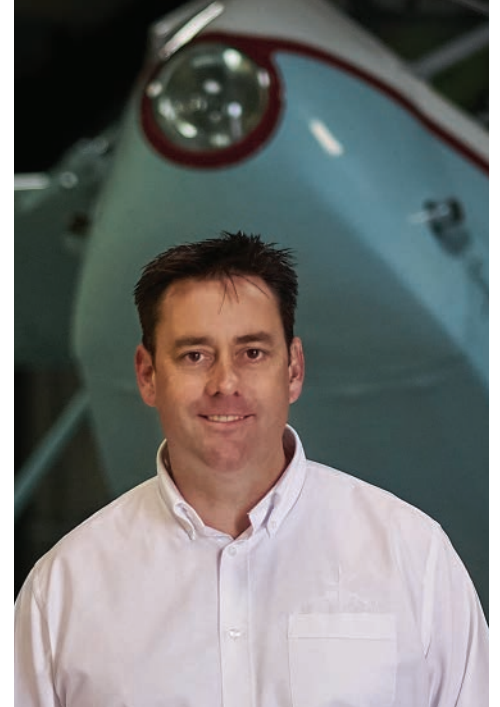
In the UK, we are over reliant on poor road and rail infrastructure. Commuter air travel, for example, regional flights between small airports has declined over the last 50 years because of increasing costs, noise and emissions.

In 2014, Neil set up Faradair®, to solve the fundamental problems facing regional flight; noise, emissions and operational costs, to make life better for commuters and their businesses and to keep his promise to his dad to *"finish what he started"*.

Faradair call their aircraft BEHA - Bio-Electric-Hybrid-Aircraft. In plain English, it means it's a quiet, economical, low emission aircraft, a hybrid of a traditional engine and electric aircraft that seats six to eight people. It's a viable form of regional transportation with the ultimate intention to build a larger 20-30 seat version in the future.

By the end of 2016, Faradair had won two business awards including one for Innovation, secured initial angel investment and added key personnel to the team to enable the development of a prototype to prove that the BEHA does deliver the efficient, quiet and cost-effective flight that it promises.





©Faradair Neil Cloughley, Faradair

“It’s taken two years to get this far and it often feels like you take two steps forward just to take a step back.”

Despite being supported by an expert, well-respected and connected team Faradair has struggled to attract the large investment it needs to move to prototype.

The Aerospace Technology Institute (ATI) is responsible for funding, developing and maintaining the UK’s prominence in the aerospace sector, yet Faradair is out of scope for most grant funding criteria because they are not working with or part of the commercial aviation supply chain for the big ‘Tier 1’ aviation companies.

To apply for a grant to innovate you have to already be working with one of the incumbent giants that already define ‘*how things are done*’ leaving limited scope for different thinking and innovation to flourish.

Whilst the BEHA was initially designed for regional flights for people between cities, it’s flight characteristics and capabilities are now opening new market opportunities, for example, to aid conservation efforts in combating poachers and

tracking wildlife, air taxi services for organisations, hotels, resorts and government organisations, police and emergency service operations, light freight/utility cargo operations during unsocial hours and many more roles.

Neil’s 7 innovation tips

1. You need resilience – it’s bloody hard.
2. You have to be committed to why you are innovating – otherwise it’s too easy to give up.
3. Be absolutely clear on what you are trying to achieve and what is being asked from you. Get it in writing.
4. Allow time because the most important things can come from the most bizarre angles.
5. You need investment - innovation is hugely enjoyable and a lot easier without the stress inducing constraints of limited time and no budget.
6. Network, network, network, it’s not what you know, but who you know.
7. If you have identified a valid problem, there is an inherent urgency in solving it. Some innovation companies never deliver anything. Depending on the industry you are working in you need to look to deliver within five years, not 50.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Faradair go to www.faradair.com



LEXI – an idea ahead of its time



Giles Long, LEXI

Giles Long MBE is a triple Paralympic gold medallist, inventor of LEXI, the graphic system that explains Paralympic sports and CEO of Lexicon Decoder Productions.

At the age of 13 Giles was diagnosed with cancer. He didn't allow a bone tumour in his arm to put an end to his swimming career. Today Giles is one of the most successful Paralympic swimmers of our time.

Giles is the proud owner of seven Paralympic medals, but when he first showed them to people, the confused expression on their faces revealed that they simply didn't understand how special they were.

The general public is confused by disability in sport. This is compounded by a fear of offending people, so they keep questions they are bursting to ask like, *"Why is a guy with one arm racing with a guy with one leg?"* and *"How come their wheelchair is different to theirs?"* to themselves.

After Giles came back from Sydney in 2000 he had the idea to answer those types of questions in the form of LEXI.

LEXI is a graphic that helps people understand why different impairment types are grouped together by using human icons to show affected areas of the body. In combination with approved narration scripting, it crucially shows how a disability affects an athlete in a sport-specific way. For example, a disability that impacts a runner will impact a skier in a different way, which is different again for swimming. In fact, it's different for every single one of the 27 competitive Paralympic sports. No wonder the people watching are confused.

Giles told a few people in the broadcasting industry about LEXI, in the hope that it might be used to support the Paralympics in Athens in 2004, but he didn't get anywhere. He tried again for Beijing in 2008. No one was interested.



©Lexicon Decoder 2011-2017

Giles believes that the lack of interest in LEXI wasn't about the product itself, the quality of the graphic or the concept. The biggest challenge was culturally what LEXI represented. LEXI is about disability. Prior to London 2012, the Paralympics actively tried to avoid talking about disability. The Paralympics was about sport, only sport. If you look at the camera shots of the 1996 Paralympics in Barcelona they rarely even showed disability.

It wasn't until London 2012 that the culture for addressing disability in sport began to shift. Channel 4 won the broadcast rights. As part of the bid for the rights, Channel 4 committed to explaining about the classification of Paralympic sport to the watching public. And it just so happened that Giles was asked if he had any ideas about how they might do this. So, he drew LEXI with a biro on a pad for the team at Channel 4.

Finally, Giles had the breakthrough he needed and LEXI was piloted at the Paralympic World Cup in Manchester in 2011.

The time pressure of the Paralympics may have served the launch of LEXI well. With an immovable deadline fast approaching, people were forced to adopt a looser approach that would allow Channel 4 to meet the commitment it had made in its pitch for the rights to the London Paralympic Games.

The 2012 Paralympics meet the superhumans campaign on Channel 4 tackled sport and disability head-on. London 2012 Paralympics saw viewing figures like never before. Six million people watched Jonnie Peacock win the men's 100 meters. Six million people saw LEXI.

Focus groups following the games said 85% of the audience approved of LEXI. And no one was offended by talk of disability.

Giles thought that after London 2012 developing LEXI would become easier.

He was wrong.

Despite the world-class Paralympic campaign by Channel 4, outstanding viewing figures and massively positive imagery, it took about two weeks for the entrenched mind-set of *"we talk sport, not disability"* to re-establish itself. Even with all the stats and data to back it up, many people just reverted to type.



The battle to change mind-sets continues. Giles will keep pushing LEXI because he is passionate about the Paralympics and knows first-hand that what athletes want is to have their story told to the world, a story partly of sporting performance, partly of disability but also of hopes, dreams and aspiration that anyone can have regardless of their gender, sexuality or ability.

Giles' 7 innovation tips

1. You have to care about it. If you don't, how can you expect others to?
2. If your idea is ahead of its time, keep it on the back burner and every so often have another go at telling people. Don't give up.
3. Your ideas are valuable. Involve others in shaping them and at the same time protect your idea. Be diligent on paperwork and seek legal advice on IP and copyright.
4. People will be sceptical, having a new idea that is unfamiliar to people means you have work to convince others about the value of your idea.
5. From the outset, if it's an idea that you want to be big, treat it like it is big already.
6. Help people understand your idea by shining a light on what happens if change doesn't happen.
7. Break entrenched opinions by breaking patterns, Giles used to interrupt with things like *"I'm a triple Paralympic gold medallist I know what I'm talking about"* to shift the dynamic in a stuck conversation.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog

Sheer gritty bloody mindedness and belief

Phil Reardon, set up Schoolzine in Australia 10 years ago in response to a school principal's frustrations around communicating with parents. Emily Halderthay set up Schoolzine in the UK in 2016.

Schoolzine has a suite of products designed to better connect schools with parents and put an end to screwed up paper newsletters in school bags, the frustration of never reaching the same group of parents and a heap of unnecessary, costly admin in the school office. Schoolzine includes a digital newsletter, website and app which shares information, reminders, calendars, video and photos so that parents no longer have to rely on their children bringing letters home in their bags.

The UK team learned quickly that establishing Schoolzine UK is not as simple as replicating the approach that is working in Australia in the UK market.

One obvious difference between the UK and Australia is geography. There are more than 30,000 schools in the UK. Australia is 31 times the size of the UK with just 9,000 schools. On paper this makes the UK a great opportunity, a much bigger market over a much smaller geography, but it's harder than it looks on paper.

Firstly, many UK schools are becoming Academies, funded directly by the Department of Education. There are also several multi-academy trusts which results in slow and complex decision making.

The team have also learned that, *"Selling to schools in the UK is really hard. Whilst Australian schools are not rich, it seems that many UK schools simply don't have the same level of funds available to them."*

In addition to budget constraints, school stakeholders are time poor. *"Whilst they always love what we offer, the challenge to get them to account set-up stage can often be immense!"*





Emily Halderthay, Schoolzine

“A big learning curve is about understanding who makes the decision, and working out how and if we can speak directly with them.”

It's also important the schools using the platform use it well, so Emily and the team have a job to do to help encourage teachers and parents understand how their products could help them. *“parents will download the app when they know the information contained there is relevant and useful for them”*

The schools that are having success with Schoolzine are also led by Head Teachers who think differently; who can see a problem and then do something

about it and are prepared to test out something new to make an improvement rather than tolerating the status quo.

The focus for Emily and the team moving forward is to continue to grow their UK customer base.

“It's mostly sheer gritty bloody mindedness right now and the belief in our amazing service to schools.”

Emily's 7 innovation tips

1. Be bold – lose your inhibitions and be resilient.
2. If something doesn't work – think differently about how you approach it.
3. Take feedback from your markets, from your customers and use it to improve your approach, messaging and results.
4. Take any and every opportunity you can to market your product.
5. Keep open minded as well as an element of realism (open minded is very different from mindless optimism!).
6. Face your fears and face tough decisions. Grit your teeth and do the stuff that's not enjoyable.
7. With decisions remember it's not Armageddon – really think about what's the worst that can happen? It's unlikely to be as bad as you think.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Schoolzine go to www.schoolzine.co.uk

Neil, Giles and Emily have all made progress because they have resilience and when faced with setbacks just keep going. When you are your own boss learning from failure can be hard, and in our experience, it is even harder when you are innovating within an organisation. Creating an environment where learning from failure is actively encouraged is critical for successful innovation. If fear of failure is holding you back check out our tips for overcoming it on page 45.



Connect

People work with people they know, like and trust. As Neil from Faradair said on page 23, even today, it's not what you know but who you know. Our survey respondents suggest being inclusive and connected, both internally and externally builds capacity for innovation. That's why it's important to make building networks part of business as usual. In this section Caroyln Pearson Founder at Maiden Voyage and Tim Farmer Founder of TSF Consultants share their stories.

My 'why' is simple - I wanted to find a better way

Advancements in medical research and care mean that we are living longer - often with many different and complex conditions. This means that more people are also living with a reduced mental capacity to make decisions in their own best interests. If you are concerned about someone's decision-making capacity, then you can request a mental capacity assessment. Currently, the average time for an assessment from a GP is four months and the standard of report is often poor.

Tim Farmer, a registered mental health nurse with over 20 years' experience of working with individuals with reduced capacity was appalled by the length of time this sort of assessment can take. When

someone requests a mental capacity assessment it is often when they are at crisis point and four months is just too long. Tim set up the (now multi-award winning) TSF Consultants to do something about it.

"The why is simple – I wanted to find a better way of doing it."

Tim was told his idea to deliver high quality, mental capacity assessments quickly wouldn't work. Mental capacity assessments are traditionally carried out by doctors – not nurses. *"I was unconventional because I was 'just a nurse'"*



Tim asked his friend Dave Nicholds, a solicitor, with experience in the sector for advice. His first question was "Can you do them?" (yes) followed by 'Is there a reason why you can't?' (no).

Tim drafted a letter to solicitors outlining the offer of a more compassionate, better quality and fast mental capacity assessment service.





Tim Farmer, TSF Consultants

Three solicitors were interested. Tim met them and proved what he promised in his letter by completing a high-quality mental capacity assessment for them quickly. At the same time, he started to increase his profile by writing articles for leading journals. He used LinkedIn to connect with and meet key people in the field explaining what he could do to help them. Over time this approach gained momentum.

"We set out to provide the assessment in a week. Due to our current workload, we currently average two weeks, it means we have had to revise our target, but it's still a hell of a lot quicker than GPs"

Tim and Dave still meet at least once a month to talk through challenges, new ideas and successes. Tim has also added a mentor to his list of confidants and finds *"both these sounding boards are essential. They constantly challenge me, help me focus on the immediate issues and plan for the longer term. They are also great support for when things go wrong!"*

Now TSF Consultants have over 40 assessors across the UK. 99% of all assessments occur in the individual's home at a time of their choosing, helping to ensure they feel safe and they can be at their optimum during the assessment.

"There will always be naysayers whatever industry you are in – that's why your own belief is important."

Tim has tackled a lot of challenges in setting up TSF Consultants. They constantly change their approach to get around obstacles. Tim feels his knowledge of Martial Arts has come in handy. *"In martial arts, we often talk about water. I approach any challenge like water approaches an obstacle. When water comes up against something in its path it either seeks out an alternative route, a nook to pass through or a different way around or it simply waits until it's build up enough momentum to go over the top."*

Everything TSF Consultants do is built from Tim's original focus of providing a service that puts the needs of the person requiring the mental capacity assessment first and getting the right outcomes for vulnerable people.

Tim's 7 innovation tips

1. Find allies – people who have insight into the topic and have 'got your back'.
2. Understand why it's important to you. Make sure as you develop your products and services you always come back to why you are doing it.
3. It's a roller coaster ride. It's fantastic when you are up and very isolating when you are not. You have to be resilient to get through the low times.
4. Identify and focus on the key areas that you need help with – and ask for help.
5. Ideas and products develop over time, understand what people want, evolve, develop and fine-tune.
6. Don't be afraid to voice your own opinion.
7. Just do it. Better to try and fail than not to give it a try. "Trying and failing results in learning. Failing to try results in a lifetime of regret".

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on TSF Consultants go to www.tsfconsultants.co.uk

Finding the right mentor - Don't be afraid to ask for help

There is a lot of joy in solo travel but sometimes when you feel unsafe and opt for room service over exploring the local restaurants it can feel like a missed opportunity. That's why Carolyn Pearson set up Maiden Voyage, a business that supports lone women travellers.

Carolyn's idea for Maiden Voyage was back in 2008 when she was working in LA and decided to stay a few extra days. Downtown LA was deserted at the weekend, which was fine during the day, but at night it felt different. Confined to a hotel in the evening because she felt unsafe on her own made Carolyn wonder how many other women had been in the same situation.



Carolyn Pearson, Maiden Voyage

Coming from a tech background her approach was to test her idea of a women business travel network. She made a prototype, developed a website and put it online.

According to Carolyn, Maiden Voyage wasn't ever meant to be a full-time business. However, the Maiden Voyage site was live and gaining traction. It was featured in CNN, the New York Times, on the BBC and in the Guardian. It was only then that Carolyn started to consider Maiden Voyage as a business. She quit her day job of Head of e-commerce for easyJet in 2013.

Today Maiden Voyage provides a global network for women travellers, travel safety tips and advice and accommodation recommendations for hotels that have been vetted to be safe for women travelling on their own by Maiden Voyage inspectors.

The business model is primarily a corporate membership programme and clients include Leeds Beckett University, Richemont and BP and a number of Silicon Valley and Hollywood big hitters. They also deliver training for women travellers on how to stay safe and train hospitality and hotel staff on how to help lone women travellers feel comfortable on their own. They have recently released their training as an e-learning package to make it more accessible for the larger corporates.

“I wake up and do my best every day to achieve as much as I can for the company – and that’s the best I can do.”



Carolyn has learned that sales for Maiden Voyage is about owing their space in the market and raising their visibility so that people come to them. *“Cold calling is demoralising, you need to be able to make deals without picking up the phone. I’ve found that the less we sell the more people buy. You achieve that by building relationships and being passionate about what you do”*

***“Don’t be afraid to ask for help.
Finding the right mentor is like dating
– it’s about equal roles.”***

One piece of advice from Carolyn is not to be afraid to ask for help. Get a mentor. Finding the range of skills and experience that you need might not all be in one person. Carolyn has five or six different mentors, each one has their specialist area, for a tricky sales question she’ll ask the mentor with sales experience, for a motivational shove she’ll ask someone else.

You also have to seek opportunities to meet the mentors you want, for example one of Carolyn’s mentors is Lara Morgan, an author, motivational speaker and venture capitalist. Lara and Carolyn met when Lara was speaking at an event at Cranfield School of Management. Carolyn was in the audience and asked a question. Lara asked a question back. At the end of the event Lara took Carolyn aside and offered herself as a mentor.

Carolyn’s 7 innovation tips

1. Get a coach or a mentor don’t be afraid to ask for help.
2. You never know how close you are to a breakthrough – don’t give up. Her mantra is *“consistent persistence.”*
3. Don’t over think it - the product, service or invention you are working on now, won’t be the final thing.
4. You can spend forever over engineering something that no one wants. Get your minimal viable product (MVP) into the market as quickly as you can and see how your customers respond.
5. You have to be resilient and so *‘apply your own oxygen mask first’*. Take regular exercise, get enough sleep and look after yourself. Don’t feel guilty about doing that either.
6. Days off are important. Your best thinking will often happen when you are not behind a desk.
7. Punch above your weight. Become a subject matter expert. Speak at events and exhibitions in front of the right people.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Maiden Voyage go to www.maiden-voyage.com

Make building connections and a support network part of business as usual. Check out our tips on pages 46 and 47.



Engage

Every interviewee mentioned engaging with people, whether that is customers or colleagues in order to understand their needs and provide products, services and messaging that resonate with them. In this section hear from Lyndsey Marshall founder at mumandbabyonline, Lucy Geddes and Paul Davies at Manchester Camarata and Paul and Helena King, Directors at Euro-Matic.

When you understand the marketplace, you can spot opportunities

800,000 babies are born in the UK every year. Having a baby is high on the list of life-changing events. Parents-to-be and new parents are hungry for information. And there is a LOT available - as well as brands wanting to get their products in front of new customers.

Government legislation, medical advice and World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines on child health change with new research and advances in medicine. Sometimes when parents-to-be or new parents search online they can receive conflicting information and advice. This can be confusing and stressful, especially for first time parents.

In the back end of 2009, Lyndsey Marshall was working at Emma's Diary – a company (with links to the NHS) which offers parenting advice for parents-to-be and new parents. She saw new parents spending hours signing up to everything only to be bombarded by information that may not be relevant to their personal circumstances.

Lyndsey saw first-hand the impact of how the guidance on infant feeding (particularly in relation to breast feeding) was becoming increasingly difficult for companies and brands to communicate to parents, and for parents to be appropriately informed. Highly conscious that this key audience were hungry for information on how best to feed and nurture their little-ones, she set about finding solutions.



Lyndsey Marshall, mumandbabyonline

“I believe that all parents have the right to know what options are available to feed their babies, and be communicated with appropriately within the context of the WHO International Code of Marketing of breast-milk substitutes.”

Lyndsey saw there was an opportunity for a single portal (unrelated to the NHS), to enable baby-related brands to communicate with parents-to-be and new parents, on infant feeding and provide information as well as choice of the best products in the market.

“Having worked with the key brands in the mum and baby market and built up strong relationships, I felt I could offer them a solution for their future communications as well as a solution for the consumer.”

mumandbabyonline.co.uk was founded in 2010 – a portal that enables the consumer to sign up only once to join the many baby clubs listed on the site.

The site acts as an independent source for key parenting brands, including those offering infant nutrition, and through the brands listed, provides the most up to date information, products and services which parents can choose to hear from at times which will help them bring up their new-born. Leading brands range from (and are not limited to) baby clubs, baby food and milks to retailers and cash back sites.

Since its launch there has been constant site testing to ensure the right audience is attracted to sign up and that the website content is appropriate.

“I’m very excited about the future of the business, as more brands come on board and experience the quality of the data that mumandbabyonline.co.uk can deliver them, which means their brands have consumer engagement which ultimately leads them to be profitable.”

Lyndsey's 7 innovation tips

1. Be aware of your competitors as the landscape often changes.
2. Put the consumer at the heart of what you are doing – it's about them not you.
3. Be absolutely clear on what your proposition is and how it adds value to your customer.
4. If you spot an opportunity - just go for it. If you don't someone else will.
5. Don't give up the day job until you prove the concept is a good idea and will provide you with an income.
6. Busy people make stuff happen – surround yourself with other busy people.
7. Think about how your product is different to other offers in the market – have a clear proposition that differentiates you.



Engaging and inspiring new audiences through music

Manchester Camerata is one of Europe's leading chamber orchestras.

Several years ago, the team realised that their audiences were dwindling and that they needed to do something different if the orchestra was to survive.

They sat down and questioned their own existence. What was their purpose in a rapidly changing world which looked very different from the world of 1972 when the orchestra was founded?

They revised their core purpose *'to create inspiring experiences through music that connects with everyone every time.'* And in order to achieve this they have, over the last few years redefined what an orchestra can do.

"We want them to come on the journey with us, and enjoy these new exciting collaborations and see the benefit of this." (on new audiences)

They shifted from just classical music to offer a bold range of musical experiences; from their Hacienda Classical gigs, where they cover acid house anthems in a range of venues, to opening the pyramid stage at Glastonbury 2017 as well as playing live film soundtracks and performing in rock venues.



Lucy Geddes, Manchester Camarata

An integral part of Manchester Camerata's work is to use music as a tool to develop skills that improve quality of life for people of all ages. The work is research-led and driven by the needs of participants, working alongside national agendas around arts and health and cultural education.

In 2012, Camerata began working with music therapists as part of their Music in Mind programme for people living with dementia and their carers.

The project has made a positive impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of people with dementia. It was shown that these benefits increased the longer that a participant engaged



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with the sessions and regular attendance led to an improved mood, reduced levels of anxiety, reduced levels of repetitive behaviour, an increase in social interaction levels and confidence to express oneself musically.

Some participants have even reduced their medication and need for other health services as a result, and the music sessions have also helped make carers' daily tasks easier to undertake. Robbie and Chris attended Manchester Camerata projects in 2015. Robbie said:

“My wife Chris had only recently been diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer’s when we were told about a music and visual arts project run by Manchester Camerata. We didn’t know what to expect but we liked singing so thought we’d give it a go.”

“Over the next 12 weeks or so, we really looked forward to those weekly sessions but still had no clue as to where it was all leading. As the ‘mystery tour’ unfolded, we had such fun singing and making music with other people – before we knew it, we’d created a fantastic piece of visual art and composed songs to go with it, all with the help and guidance of people from Camerata, who seemed to be enjoying themselves as much as we were!”

“What remains as a powerful memory is the smiles on peoples’ faces, the laughter and the realisation that this sort of experience can bring forth creativity and energy from people with dementia that they didn’t know they had – and actually, it was exactly the same for the carers taking part. We’re already looking forward to the next one!”

There are always challenges to doing something new. As the population ages and people live longer with more complex needs, more care staff will be needed. One of the ways the team is tackling this is through a training programme for carers and activities coordinators in care homes and hospitals, so that they can continue delivering music sessions once a Music in Mind project ends.

Since its bold reinvention in 2014, Camerata has tripled its audience. In 2017, they facilitated 11,500 people to write their own music. In the future, Manchester Camerata will continue to work alongside research institutions to be at the forefront of delivering arts practices within health and social care and within the education system to create inspiring experiences through music that connects with everyone every time.

Manchester Camerata’s 7 innovation tips

1. Respond to the ideas and wishes of the people you are working with; it’s much more likely then to have a positive outcome if you put them first. Don’t assume that they ‘need’ your services.
2. Have courage and conviction in piloting new ideas.
3. Building relationships is absolutely key.
4. Constantly assess and adapt your programmes to ensure that they continue to benefit all stakeholders.
5. Audience development is an organisation-wide endeavour.
6. Bring your audience on a journey with you.
7. Make improvements based on evidence and research.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Manchester Camarata go to www.manchestercamerata.co.uk



The business of balls – more to it than you think

Paul King has been running the UK arm of Euro-Matic - the world's leading manufacturer of hollow plastic balls since August 2016 and his wife Helena joined the business in August 2017.

Established in 1967 in Hungary, Euro-Matic manufactures over 140 different types of hollow plastic balls. The UK was just a small part of their international business and a long-established agreement for distribution in the UK was coming to an end.



Paul, an engineer by trade with 20 years experience in plastics, packaging and product development spotted an opportunity; Euro-Matic were overlooking the UK market as small fry so he made an offer

to take the UK and other under-served countries distribution off Euro-Matics hands.

When Paul and Helena really got started in the business of balls they realised it was a much bigger opportunity than they had initially thought. The uses for plastic balls is surprisingly vast. It includes:

- ◆ Playpen balls for children (and adults).
- ◆ On open water, for example, ponds and reservoirs to stop flocks of birds settling.
- ◆ Protecting emergency water supplies in large-scale manufacture from clogging up with algae.
- ◆ In reservoirs to stop algae forming so reducing the amount of chemicals the local water authority has to use - enabling wildlife to flourish.
- ◆ To keep Koi carp ponds and the Koi carp they contain warm in winter.
- ◆ Heating or cooling chemical or water tanks during manufacturing processes for a range of different products.
- ◆ Every Henry Hoover contains a Euro-Matic ball as part of the valve system.



Helena and Paul King, Euro-Matic

With such a vast range of completely different markets, Paul and Helena knew they needed to be strategic in how they approached the business.

They prioritised their existing customers.

They wrote to all Euro-Matic UK customers for feedback. Overall their customers told them that the product was good but the customer service had been poor. However, customers were surprised and delighted to be asked their views for the first time and were hopeful that the service would improve.

“With the likes of Amazon and next day delivery, it increases customer expectations and we have to compete with that.”



They visited long-term customers in person to dig a bit deeper. *“We listened to a fair amount of moaning about the old distributors, which helped us make big improvements to our service and also reassured customers we were serious about supporting them in the future”*

Having done as much as they could to keep their current customers happy, they turned their attention to attracting new customers.

They looked at each sector in turn (children's playpen areas, open water, manufacturing, fishing enthusiasts etc.). They explored what was important to them, what problems their product could solve and which channels to use to reach them. For example, they researched all the UK organisations that might be interested in children's playpens. They called them, mailed them and wrote blogs about how their products had helped other playpen users and what was unique about their offer in comparison to competitors e.g. Quality guarantees, certifications and range. Then within the playpen ball category, they looked at other segments. For example, ball pits are used in nurseries for children, but also in bars, for corporate events, nightclubs, birthdays, summer fetes and weddings.

“Every time we get a quiet spot we plan for the future.”

Within the first month of Euro-Matic UK, Paul and Helena had achieved 50% of their annual target. They closed their first financial year (7 months trading) with a healthy profit and this year they are set to triple that. They put their success down to being focused on the markets that have the most potential, networking and meeting people face to face to build relationships and an understanding of their customers' needs. They work pretty well as a team too.



“It's not rocket science – it's just a drive to succeed.” We had to create new networks with people who are influencers or advocates for our product.”

As of today, they have around 7 large scale tenders for water authorities, gold mines, airports and reservoirs as well as supplying to the largest play equipment manufacturers in the UK who supply playhouses and pubs.

Paul and Helena's 7 innovation tips

1. Get to know and understand your customers. It's not enough to have an idea or a product - you have to consider what makes it unique.
2. Treat your small organisation like it is a big organisation from the start with processes, formal reporting and structure.
3. Keep on top of all your numbers. Have an admin process.
4. Core business happens every day and it's important to keep an eye on the bigger picture.
5. Never sit back and accept, you have to constantly drive things forward.
6. Don't ring-fence yourself into one product or sector - think fluidly to look for new opportunities.
7. Make sure that for anything that you create, you own the intellectual property and you have legal agreements in place.

For the full length article go to www.lucidity.org.uk/blog
For more on Euro-Matic go to www.euro-matic.co.uk

If you don't understand your marketplace and your audience needs you are taking an unnecessary risk. Check out personas and tips on gaining insights on pages 48-50 for practical ways to engage with and understand your audiences.



Summary

This is the practical bit – for each FORCE theme that we’ve identified as being important we’ve put together some tips.

Whether you choose to innovate incrementally, focus on new product development, really test the unknown with a radical approach to innovation or do nothing, what is clear is that there is no one ‘right’ approach.

It is important to start with a problem that needs solving rather than just a good idea. The act of starting something, and an attitude of *“better done than perfect”* seems important and the best approach becomes clearer only through taking action and learning. Where you start rarely seems to be where you end up.

Author Jodi Picoult said

“You can edit a bad page, but you can’t edit a blank page.”

Very few survey respondents cited lack of skill as a blocker to innovation, the biggest blocks were around more cultural nuances including fear or failure or risk aversion and the single biggest block is not having the time and space to think clearly.

When you work on your own or in a small organisation you can set the culture, when you work for someone else or a larger organisation it can be more difficult. However, we can all make changes to lead innovation within our own sphere of influence, for example our own day-to-day work and within our immediate teams to start to drive a culture that supports innovation.

“Imagine a situation in which everyone is safe to take risks, voice their opinions, and ask judgment-free questions. A culture where managers provide air cover and create safe zones so employees can let down their guard. That’s a culture that supports innovation.”



No one told us that coming up with ideas was a problem (having too many ideas and no time to action them was a bigger challenge) so, perhaps strangely for a practical guide on innovation we've not included anything on 'thinking creatively'.*

With the right leadership innovation can thrive in large organisations, who have the advantage of budgets to invest in new initiatives. Some like British Gas choose to create an incubator for innovation, others keep innovation in the core business. I spoke to Tom Butterworth, Associate Director at WSP, one of the world's leading engineering professional services firms, with 42,000 talented people, based in more than 500 offices, across 40 countries.

Part of WSP's core brand is to tackle the status quo. They are addressing some of the mega trends like how aging populations and climate change might affect the development of our environments. They actively work with their clients and seek collaborations to identify the problems of the future. There is scope within the core business to make the case to bring on specialist roles to tackle these problems to enable them to build both environments as well as a business for the future.

The innovation leaders all have what my grandma would have described as '*gumption*'. When asked if they had a choice about whether to innovate, they considered the question and said something similar along the lines of '*they do; but not really, they had no choice but to make their ideas reality – they would regret not doing it.*'

Innovative leaders all possess buckets of passion for what they are doing and are able to seek out opportunities. They are resilient and get back up and dust themselves off again and again and again. They are bloody-minded and just keep going because the problem or idea they are working on is too important to ignore. They are courageous knowing that doing anything new is hard. They work to get buy-in and support from others to help make the idea happen as well as being humble enough to ask for help and support to get them through the emotional setbacks and successes.

These are the consistencies of innovation leaders whether you are within an organisation or a free agent. It's your choice to be an innovation leader regardless of your role or job title.

Practical tips and templates

The next pages contain some practical tips and templates on the FORCE themes to help you develop your innovation leadership skills and stay focused, optimise time, build your resilience, connect with others and engage with your audiences.

Good luck and may the FORCE be with you.

*If you're looking for tips on thinking creatively check out the innovation toolkit downloadable from www.lucidity.org.uk/freestuff.

Focus

Pinpoint your problem

Often we jump to solutions before really understanding the actual problem that we are trying to solve. Time taken at the beginning to ensure you are solving the right problem is time well spent. One way to do this is to ask 'Why?' five times.

“If I had one hour to save the world, I would spend fifty-five minutes defining the problem and only five minutes finding the solution.”

Albert Einstein

Ask 'Why?' five times:

My activity or challenge is...

– Why is this important?

Because...

– Why?

Because...

– Why?

Because...

– Why?

Because...

– Why?

Because...

The root cause of the problem is...

If after asking 'Why?' five times you are still sure the activity will help you achieve your objectives, then you are probably on the right track.

Opportunity cost decision template

An 'opportunity cost' is a benefit, profit, or value of something that must be given up to acquire or achieve something else. Since every resource (money, time, skills, etc.) can be put to alternative uses, every action, choice, or decision has an

associated opportunity cost. When making decisions about which ideas to progress or not, it can be helpful to determine the opportunity cost of picking one option over the other (or no options at all), to see which would be the most beneficial option.

What is the idea you are considering?

What resources are required to make it happen (eg. time/money/skills)?

What is the purpose (eg. why is it important)?

End game – what does success look like (eg. money/savings/happy staff)?

How much capacity do you currently have (eg. time/money/skills)?

If you do this, what do you stop doing?

Name of resource freed up:

Impact:

Asking questions

Asking *provocative* questions can help you to uncover a purpose for your innovation and give you a steer on what you should be working on. They help you to think differently about an issue. Some examples of provocative questions are:

- ◆ What are our competitors working on that might put us out of business?
- ◆ What new technology might make our product obsolete tomorrow?
- ◆ What new legislation could potentially ruin our business?
- ◆ How might we run our business without staff?
- ◆ How might we give our products away for free and generate income?
- ◆ How might we communicate with our customers if we didn't use email?
- ◆ What if you had limitless budget?

What if you had no budget? What are you currently working on? What provocative question can you ask to help you think differently and identify the areas to innovate around?

Ask how might we?

When you are clear on your purpose, there are ways of articulating it that will help spark ideas and inspire others to get involved. One way of doing this is to frame your purposeful innovation as a question and ask, 'How might we?'

Warren Berger, in his Harvard Business Review blog explains how some of the most successful companies in business are known for tackling difficult creative challenges by first asking, how might we improve X ... or completely re-imagine Y... or find a new way to accomplish Z?

Berger explains that when people try to innovate, they often talk about the challenges or the problems they are facing by using language that can inhibit creativity instead of encouraging it. People often ask, 'How can we do this?' or 'How should we do

that?' The 'can' and 'should' in the question implies judgment. Can we really do it? Should we? Using the word 'might' instead of 'can' or 'should' defers judgment which releases people to create more options and therefore more possibilities for creativity. The use of the word 'might' also takes the pressure off coming up with something immediately workable. It subtly indicates that the idea you are suggesting might work or it might not, and either way that is ok, because we are just generating ideas about the possibilities.

The Goldilocks Principle

Your question needs to be ambitious enough to provide opportunities for change and creativity, yet focused enough to be achievable. Just like Goldilocks' porridge it needs to be just right. For example, 'How might we end world poverty?' is too big, but 'How might we ensure that every family in the UK has a safe place to live?' still has ambition, yet feels more achievable.

Take care to make your question free of jargon. Test it out on someone who knows nothing about the topic. Does it make sense to them? Does it spark ideas? Like any new skill, framing the problem in the way to get the best results takes practice, but if you are spending time really considering the problem and articulating it well, you will be leagues ahead in the innovation leadership stakes.

Notes

Optimise time

How to make more time and prioritise your time

We all have the same number of hours in the day. Below are the tips we've learned from those people that simply get more stuff done.

1. Work when you are at your best Humans are not programmed to work between the conventional office working hours of 9-5. Some people are best early morning, others are night owls and some thrive at 3pm. Work out how you can do the most difficult stuff that requires real thinking when you are at *your* best.

2. Get up earlier If you get up earlier you can get more done in your day. It's simple but not necessarily easy to do. If you are a person who does their best work in the morning, **definitely** get up earlier.

3. Get rid of distractions If you are attempting to do meaningful work turn off all distractions. Switch off your email, put your phone out of reach where you can't check Facebook or WhatsApp and turn off all notifications. If you work in an office put headphones on (even if you're not playing anything through them, they can signal 'do not disturb') or if your office environment is too distracting book a meeting room or work from home. Interruptions stop your flow and your brain's thought process. Once you are distracted, your brain has to find where it was, re assess the situation, and then make the effort to get back to that stopping point. That can take 15 minutes per distraction which adds up to a massive amount of wasted time. Research also

shows that people in a flow state are five times more productive than they otherwise would be.

4. Work in short bursts Humans work best in short bursts. The optimum short burst time i.e. the length of time worked vs when a break is needed will vary from person to person. Start by sitting down to focus on a piece of work for 45 minutes. Then give yourself a 15-minute break. Set an alarm to make sure you do it. Go for a walk around. Have a stretch. Breaking up your time prevents boredom and helps you to maintain a high quality of work. Lengthen and shorten your bursts to work out *your* optimum time.

5. Do one thing at a time Multi-tasking is not effective. It is true that we can do several tasks at once but we don't do any single one of them well. Researchers have shown it's more efficient to do one task after another rather than several things at once.

6. Write down clear objectives with set time limits Especially when you are really busy – ruthlessly prioritise your work. (see the opportunity template on page 41 which might also help) Give yourself realistic, yet challenging time constraints by breaking down tasks into individual steps. Give each step a realistic time limit. Work to your timetable. This will give your work purpose and the direction that you need to stay on task until you finish. Sometimes we spend hours procrastinating for perfection, your mantra is better done than perfect – get it out the door. The act of getting something done then allows feedback and according to all our innovation leaders learning is what leads to success.

Notes

Meetings and saying no

Within medium to large organisations in particular, a disproportionate number of survey respondents told us that they are too busy to innovate. Many told us that their time was taken up in meetings. So, below are some tips and suggestions to manage your time in relation to meetings.

1. What is the purpose of the meeting? If it's your meeting be absolutely clear on what the meeting is for. What does success look like? Discussion of a topic, decisions about next steps or understanding a different departments' perspective on an issue? Make sure the people you invite know the purpose and their role in the meeting.

2. Who needs to be there? When you are clear on the purpose then it's easier to make decisions about who needs to attend. Why do you need them there? What value do they add? Don't invite people 'for information'. Information can be shared in notes afterwards.

If you are invited to a meeting be absolutely clear on its purpose and why you need to be there. What value you add? If it is unclear ask the person convening the meeting. Don't agree to attend unless you know why you need to be there.

3. You can say no If there is no clear purpose for the meeting and your role is not clear then say no. Sometimes this can feel uncomfortable, but attending a meeting with no clear purpose is a waste of time. And don't just leave 'tentative' in your calendar. Be bold and say, you'd 'love to help but need to know what value you can bring before committing to coming'.

4. How long do you really need? We default to 30 minute or hour-long meetings. Could you do the meeting in 40 minutes? Or 25 minutes? And signal this by starting at the unconventional time.

For example, start your 25-minute meeting at five minutes past the hour until half past.

5. Multitasking We've all been in the meeting when someone is firefighting emails and not paying attention. If a meeting isn't worth your full attention, then you shouldn't be attending it in the first place; and if the meeting is worth your full attention, then you need to get everything you can out of it. Multitasking during meetings can create the impression that you believe you are more important than everyone else.

6. Change the dynamic Hold your meeting off-site if you can, in a coffee shop or even outside if the weather is nice enough. You could even have a walk and talk meeting. Researchers have shown that walking and talking increases creative thought. Walk and talk meetings tend to be shorter, so if you are short on time and meeting rooms, walking and talking helps solve those problems too.

7. Have meetings with yourself Earmark time in your diary for thinking time or time to work on a specific task. This signals it's important and also stops others spotting a gap in your diary and filling it with a meeting.

Just to be clear, meeting people face to face can be extremely beneficial, we really encourage people meeting, talking, having space and time to think creatively and innovate together. It's the meetings that are convened for meetings sake that don't achieve anything that drain your time and energy that need to change. If you can test just one of these tips, think how much time you could reallocate each week for more meaningful work that might have the potential to make a bigger difference.

Resilience

How to build a culture where it's ok to fail

All our innovation leaders told us if you don't fail you don't learn. The only failure is failing to try. Your first idea won't be right, you have to launch it and learn and adapt according to feedback.

The practical tips below are some proven techniques that have helped build personal resilience and teams that genuinely support each other (rather than just talking about it) to fail and learn.

You can't have a failed test Consider how you frame what failure is and the language you use. Many innovation leaders talk more about testing and learning than failure. And you can't have a failed test. You just find out if something worked or not.

Hold a pre-mortem Before a project starts think about *'what's the worst that can happen?'* Make a big list of everything bad that could occur, from the mundane to the unlikely. Then assess what you'd do if any of these things happen. We often find that we are able to deal with whatever might happen.

Be meticulous about evaluation Continuously evaluate during a project and also straight away at the end. Build it in to the project plan. Start with what went well - take stock. Celebrate. Then ask, *'if we were going to do this again, what might we do differently?'* Taking this approach helps talk about failure and learning and supports incremental innovation.

Have a structure and process for innovation

A structured approach to innovation involves prototyping, learning and adapting and then piloting,

learning and adapting before launching. This means that failure and learning are simply part of the approach.

Get out of your comfort zone and encourage others to do the same. Innovation by its nature can feel risky, by practicing and getting through the feeling of taking a risk that ends well, you expand your comfort zone, learn and grow and become more open to trying new things.

Find a way to make sharing failure OK in your team It might be about having individual objectives or rewards related to failure, or a section on team meetings to ask for help or share learning from failure - one team had the *'cock up club'* last thing on a Friday as an enjoyable way to talk about failure.

Failure is emotional and no one gets everything right first time Remember failure can make people feel vulnerable and upset. Approach others with the mindset that, *'everyone is doing the best they can with what they've got.'* It helps us focus on the learning over the emotional feelings of the failure itself.

Check your grit score Read Angela Duckworth's book *Grit* (or watch the TEDTalk) on how passion and persistence, the ability to keep going even when something has failed is the key to success. You can [find out your own grit score here](#). It's also a great way to start a conversation about failure and learning.

Regardless of your seniority lead by example. If you can be brave and share your failures and support others to share theirs, over time you will build your own resilience as well as a team dynamic that actively encourages failure, and therefore innovation to flourish.

Notes

How to network

All our innovators had strong and established networks because they know that more gets done quickly when people know, like and trust each other. This is the same for networks with colleagues within your organisation to get support and buy-in as it is for external networks.

For the majority of us, being asked to network evokes a deep sense of fear and anxiety – and often a visceral objection to the word ‘*networking*’ itself! Given that a lot of successful innovation is about who you know more than what you know, becoming a confident networker is a good use of time. Here are some simple tips that will help your networking experience become more productive. And who knows, you may even enjoy it!

Pick the events you attend carefully Just as you can’t innovate about everything, you can’t turn up to every event. Think about the types of people you are looking to meet and do your homework. Invest your time in the events you are most likely to meet your target networking audience.

Plan your journey to the networking event Allow plenty of time so you arrive as relaxed as possible. Before you go in, take a moment to refocus on why you are there. Do you want to meet an old colleague, get introduced to someone specific, or learn about a new topic?

Don’t approach closed groups By closed groups, we mean two or more people engrossed in conversation. Don’t try and join them, you end up trying to get their attention by awkwardly circling round them. If there is someone in the group you want to meet then wait from a distance until the group disperses.

Ask about their favourite topic – them! Everyone loves talking about themselves. If you find conversation isn’t coming easily, just ask open questions: Why did you come here? What are you working on? What do you do?

Look for what you have in common Do you work in similar sectors? What are the common problems you face? Do you live in the same town, support the same team, drink in the same pub? You are just looking for something in common to help build rapport – it doesn’t have to be work related.

Adopt a ‘go-giver’ attitude The purpose of networking is to help and add value to the people you meet. For anyone you talk to, think; *‘what can I give and how can I help them?’*

Don’t be afraid to ask for help Once you’ve built some rapport and tried to add value to them, people tend to like to be able to help if they can, you just have to give them the opportunity by asking them.

Move on You don’t have to stay talking to someone if you feel you are struggling. You can politely excuse yourself to get another drink, or because you have spotted someone you promised to talk to. Stand at an angle to the other person (creating an open group) and face the room so you can invite others to the conversation as well as see a clear exit route.

You’re not alone Remember, everyone in the room, whatever their role, seniority or status, will at some point have experienced the feelings of fear and apprehension that you may be feeling.

What about online? You can build meaningful relationships through online channels and the same rules apply, build rapport and first focus on how you can add value to them. However, we believe that nothing builds good relationships faster than meeting face to face.

And finally Often the purpose of a networking event is to get the follow up meeting or conversation. Have your business cards ready. Jot down the specific you were meeting the person about on their card so you don’t forget. Follow up the next day.

Build a troupe

The idea of a lone genius having a lightbulb moment is a myth. All our innovative leaders spoke about their 'go-to people' sometimes described as critical friends, sometimes as a more structured coaching or mentoring relationship and more often a combination of all three. Every innovation leader had a trusted troupe to go to for expertise, advice and support through the difficult times as well as celebrating breakthroughs and success.

How to build your troupe

It's likely that you already have a troupe, and the exercise of writing them down is a nudge to remember to call on them when you need them.

Think about the types of expertise and emotional support you need. For example, advice on a topic, someone to tell you to keep going, someone you trust to share your fears with, a person who is good with numbers, someone to tell you to stop

procrastinating, someone who makes you take stock of how far you've come, someone that doesn't let you off the hook. Write those things in the boxes below.

Then write the names of the person/people that are your 'go to' people for each one and if there is a gap, you need to think about who the person is that fills that gap.

1	6
2	7
3	8
4	9
5	10

Coaching and mentoring

In addition to your troupe you might also benefit from something a bit more specific and structured. You might look to work with a business coach or a mentor.

Broadly speaking a mentor is an experienced person that can help you with the bigger picture of where you want to go. For example, someone who has had the career trajectory that you'd like, or is working in an area you'd like to move into.

Coaching focuses more on specific issues you are working on for your shorter-term development, for example, advice on managing a complex project, navigating difficult work relationships or building your confidence for public speaking.

Many people have coaches and mentors, both can be time specific, for example once you may not need your coach, however you might need a different coach for the next challenge.

Mentors are more likely to be unpaid, the relationship is someone who volunteers their time and expertise to help you. Coaches are usually a paid for service.

The most important thing is to work out what your needs are and to ensure that the coach or mentor can supply you with the type and level of support you require.

Many industries have mentoring schemes, for example CharityComms and the Chartered Institute of Professional Development (CIPD).

Engage

How to get insights

Insight is about engaging with and understanding the needs of your audience. It's a key part of the innovation process. Without insight, innovation is risky because you could easily develop ideas, products and services that fail because your audience don't want or need them.

There are many ways to find out more about your audience and you don't need a big budget to do it. Here are some suggestions.

Focus groups Hold focus groups with your key audiences, to find out their views or attitudes to a particular topic, product or service. *

Surveys Face to face or online, these are simple to set up or use social media channels to ask people what they think of issues and campaigns. *

Ethnography The systematic study of people and cultures; spend time with your customers and observe their behaviour in their natural habitat. For example, Starbucks relies on insight from its baristas to feed into its innovation and product development process.

Create conversations Look for opportunities for dialogue, where you can pick up the phone rather than emailing. It is often the exchanges that come up in conversation that provide the best insights.

Collect data Learn about your customers through big data trends that are available, ensure your own database is as accurate as it can be; for example,

does it combine survey respondents, campaign evaluations and web analytics.

Ask more questions Whenever you get the opportunity, ask more questions, don't accept that the current product or process is the best way. You will gain lots from open questions, such as:

- Tell me how you feel about that?
- What happened?
- Help me understand?

Practice listening To get the most value from asking open questions, you have to listen. It sounds obvious, but it is a skill, like any other, that you have to practice.

Complaints What do your audience complain about? Listen in on customer services calls, follow conversations on social media, read and respond to complaint emails and letters (especially if customer care is not in your remit). Are there themes or recurring problems that indicate something broader that could be solved?

Look for what people don't do Sounds impossible, but look for reasons people don't buy your product, don't complete online transactions or attend your events, or workarounds that make up for limitations to the current offering in the marketplace.

*This comes with a health warning that people will often tell you what they want you to believe or what they think you want to know, so be mindful of this when designing your focus groups and analysing your results.

Notes

How to use personas

A persona is a pen portrait of our target audience. Personas help us to understand our target audience and stay connected to their needs. They help us to make decisions based on *their* needs not our needs.

- Start with doing your research. This is usually (and we'd recommend) a combination of focus groups, interviews, surveys, observation and informal conversations. Developing personas based on research and observations rather than conjecture is critical because all product development decisions are based on the needs of the audience. So, if you don't understand your audience, it's likely that your product you develop for them won't resonate with them.
- Personas should remind us of real people.
- Think of personas in terms of archetypes rather than stereotypes. Personas are not a single person, but a set of observations that represent an audience group of many real people. Good personas foster empathy, bring research to life and

help us engage meaningfully with our audience through understanding their attitudes, motivations and why they behave in certain ways.

- Good personas are built on rich insights not conjecture. They can help validate or disprove a design decision, help us decide which direction to take, provide inspiration during idea generation and foster empathy by giving voice to the end user. We believe they should always be work in progress as you discover more insights and develop a greater understanding of your audience.
- Three persona principles:
 1. **Fact based** Personas must be based on facts not conjecture.
 2. **Impartial** Personas must be free from personal opinion.
 3. **Primary experience** Personas must be based on qualitative data (gathered by you).

Principles with thanks to the brilliant team at Bromford Lab. (See pages 20 and 21)

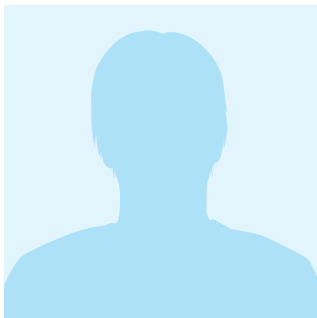
Notes

Engage

Persona template

Understanding your customer is vital for successful innovation. Whatever innovation you are developing, you must keep your customer at the front of your mind. At any stage in the process you can sense-

check. Does my customer need this? Will this help my customer? Using this persona template will help you better visualise and stay connected to the needs of your customer.



Name:

Age:

Relationship status:

Location:

Job:

Gender:

Love doing

Listens to

Frustrated by

Kept awake at night by

Responsible for

Spends time with

Motivated by

Aspires to

Notes

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Lucy Gower is founder and director at Lucidity, author of the best-selling Innovation Workout, a trainer, coach, consultant and global speaker on innovation.

Lucidity supports individuals and organisations with the confidence, skills and expertise to think differently and innovate to achieve better results.

Since 2012, Lucidity has worked with over 50 organisations to help individuals and teams to work better together to develop ideas and make change happen. Clients include Alzheimer's Society, Amnesty International, The Children's Society, Claire House Children's Hospice, Cystic Fibrosis Trust, Mind, Nesta, The Royal British Legion and Oxfam.

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